

Jmg

CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
INTERNAL NR-ELIGIBILITY REVIEW FORM

Property Name: Appraisers' Stores Building Survey Number: NA B-4496

Property Address: 103 South Gay Street, Balto

Project: rehabilitation Agency: GSA

Site visit by MHT Staff: no XX yes Name L. Bowlin Date 9/16/92

District Name: Business & Government NRHD Survey Number: B-3935

X Listed Eligible Comment

Criteria: XA B XC D Considerations: A B C D E F G None

The resource XX contributes/ does not contribute to the historic significance of this historic district in:

X Location X Design X Setting X Materials

X Workmanship X Feeling X Association

Justification for decision: (Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map)
The U.S. Appraisers' Stores and the U.S. Customs House at opposite sides of the Gay and Lombard intersection in Baltimore mark the focal point of Baltimore's commercial development. The existence of both the federal customs house and the appraisers stores reflect the continuing maritime activity that made Baltimore one of America's great ports. The present Appraisers' Stores was erected in 1932-34 replacing the antiquated Robert Mills building with an eight story reinforced concrete structure designed by prominent Baltimore architects Taylor and Fisher in association with William F. Stone. The building exhibits characteristic set back shape and strongly colored accents that characterized the American art deco architecture of the 1920s and 30s. The building is distinguished by the great stylized limestone art deco eagles at the corners of the parapets, and by the handsomely detailed granite framed main entrance surmounted by a cast aluminum eagle. Such incorporation of national imagery was very much in keeping with the heraldic nature of the commercial art deco style, and was well suited to the need to emphasize the Federal presence at the depths of the great Depression.

Documentation on the property is presented in: HSR and Historic Building Preservation

Plan/ in MHT Library and/or compliance file

Prepared by: GSA's consultant Clio Group

L. Bowlin

Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

9/30/92

Date

NR program concurrence: yes no not applicable

R. Rudman
Reviewer, NR program

10-11-92
Date

Survey No. B-4496

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA - HISTORIC CONTEXT

I. Geographic Region:

☐ Eastern Shore (all Eastern Shore counties, and Cecil)
☐ Western Shore (Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Prince George's and St. Mary's)
☒ Piedmont (Baltimore City, Baltimore, Carroll, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Montgomery)
☐ Western Maryland (Allegany, Garrett and Washington)

II. Chronological/Developmental Periods:

☐ Paleo-Indian 10000-7500 B.C.
☐ Early Archaic 7500-6000 B.C.
☐ Middle Archaic 6000-4000 B.C.
☐ Late Archaic 4000-2000 B.C.
☐ Early Woodland 2000-500 B.C.
☐ Middle Woodland 500 B.C. - A.D. 900
☐ Late Woodland/Archaic A.D. 900-1600
☐ Contact and Settlement A.D. 1570-1750
☐ Rural Agrarian Intensification A.D. 1680-1815
☐ Agricultural-Industrial Transition A.D. 1815-1870
☐ Industrial/Urban Dominance A.D. 1870-1930
☒ Modern Period A.D. 1930-Present
☐ Unknown Period (☐ prehistoric ☐ historic)

III. Prehistoric Period Themes:

☐ Subsistence
☐ Settlement
☐ Political
☐ Demographic
☐ Religion
☐ Technology
☐ Environmental Adaption

IV. Historic Period Themes:

☐ Agriculture
☒ Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Community Planning
☒ Economic (Commercial and Industrial)
☒ Government/Law
☐ Military
☐ Religion
☐ Social/Educational/Cultural
☐ Transportation

V. Resource Type:

Category: building

Historic Environment: urban

Historic Function(s) and Use(s): commerce/ government/customhouse

Known Design Source: Robert E. Lee Taylor/ David K. E. Fisher/ William F. Stone

B-4496

UNITED STATES APPRAISERS' STORES

103 South Gay Street

Baltimore, Maryland

1932

The United States Appraisers' Stores of the U.S. Customs Service is an eight-story, rectangular-massed building, constructed of reinforced concrete flat-plate slabs and columns, and clad in brick. Designed by the Baltimore architectural firm of Taylor & Fisher, with William F. Stone, Jr., it illustrates the Art Deco design aesthetics promulgated by the federal government during the Great Depression. The design gives an impression of solidity and steadfastness in times of economic turmoil, while at the same time not appearing unnecessarily opulent or excessive. The U.S. Appraisers' Stores is the most recent in a series of architecturally significant federal buildings constructed adjacent to the original port of Baltimore for the purpose of monitoring, inspecting, and appraising imported merchandise.

B-4496

UNITED STATES APPRAISERS' STORES

103 South Gay Street

Baltimore, Maryland

1932

HISTORIC CONTEXT

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization:	Piedmont (Baltimore City)
Chronological/Development Periods:	Modern Period (A.D. 1930 - Present)
Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s):	Government/Law
Resource Type:	
Category:	Building
Historic Environment:	Urban
Historic Function(s) and Use(s):	Storage and Inspection Facility, laboratory
Known Design Source:	Taylor & Fisher, and William F. Stone, Jr, architects, Baltimore

**Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form**

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. B-4496

Magi No.

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic United States Appraisers' Stores

and/or common United States Appraisers' Stores

2. Location

street & number 103 South Gay Street N/A not for publication

city, town Baltimore N/A vicinity of congressional district 39th

state Maryland county City of Baltimore

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<u> </u> district	<u> </u> public	<u> </u> occupied	<u> </u> agriculture
<u> </u> building(s)	<u> </u> private	<u> </u> unoccupied	<u> </u> commercial
<u> </u> structure	<u> </u> both	<u> </u> work in progress	<u> </u> educational
<u> </u> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<u> </u> entertainment
<u> </u> object	<u> </u> in process	<u> </u> yes: restricted	<u> </u> government
	<u> </u> being considered	<u> </u> yes: unrestricted	<u> </u> industrial
	<u> </u> not applicable	<u> </u> no	<u> </u> military
			<u> </u> museum
			<u> </u> park
			<u> </u> private residence
			<u> </u> religious
			<u> </u> scientific
			<u> </u> transportation
			<u> </u> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Public Building Service, General Services Administration, Region 3

street & number 100 Penn Square East telephone no.: (215) 656-5685

city, town Philadelphia state and zip code Pennsylvania 19107-3396

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Abel Wolman Municipal Office Building liber SCL05312

street & number 200 North Holliday Street folio 0564

city, town Baltimore state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title "United States Appraisers' Stores, Baltimore, Maryland, Historic Structure Report" by the Clio Group, Inc., with Thomas & Newswanger, Architects

date October 8, 1987 federal state county local

pository for survey records Public Building Service, GSA, Region 3

city, town Philadelphia state Pennsylvania

7. Description

Survey No. B-4496

Condition

☒ excellent
☐ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☒ unaltered
☐ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date of move _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE COUNT: 1

Summary Description

The United States Appraisers' Stores, located at 103 South Gay Street (at the southeast corner of South Gay and East Lombard Streets), is an eight-story, rectangular-massed building, constructed of reinforced concrete flat-plate slabs and columns, and clad in brick. It was designed in the Art Deco style and its primary facade is the west, facing onto South Gay Street. It was erected in 1933 and it replaced an earlier building, called the U.S. Public Store House No. 1, that performed the same function. The U.S. Appraisers' Stores building was operated by the U.S. Customs Service (an agency of the U.S. Treasury Department) and it was used for the storage, inspection, and appraisal of various goods imported through the Port of Baltimore; it contained large, open floor areas with concomitant loading docks and freight elevators. It also contained laboratories for conducting tests and a courtroom for hearing disputes relating to imported goods. The building contained consistent levels of detail that reflected its Art Deco style; open storage spaces had unfinished floors, walls, and ceilings. Laboratory spaces on the seventh and eighth floors contained tile floors, plaster walls and ceilings, and black stone (presumably soap stone) bases. Office areas, which were typically located on the west side of each floor in the building to the west of the passenger elevator bank, contained tile floors, plaster walls and ceilings, wood bases, and in some areas, wood chair rails, and wood picture mouldings. The elevator lobbies contained terrazzo floors with contrasting terrazzo borders, marble wainscots and bases, and plaster walls and ceilings. Finally, the Courtroom, on the seventh floor, contained a tile floor, wood paneled wainscots, and a thinly-stepped plaster cornice. The building has received limited alterations; in general, the most significant changes have involved the installation of partitions in open storage areas on all floors and the removal of the laboratory equipment from the seventh and eighth floors. Functionally, the U.S. Appraisers' Stores building was used primarily by the U.S. Customs Service until 1982, when the Baltimore Region was merged with the Boston Region and many of the functions were relocated elsewhere. At present, the building is occupied by several different Federal agencies.

General Description of the Site and Building

Physically, the site of the U.S. Appraisers' Stores is fully covered by the footprint of the building, which is 100 feet (north-south) by 170 feet (east-west).¹ East Lombard Street and South Gay Street are to the north and west of the building, respectively. To the east of the building is a paved parking lot in the abandoned South Frederick Street right-of-way and the lot immediately to the east. The same parking lot wraps around the south side of the building and occupies the abandoned Smith

¹ Three sheets of drawings prepared by John R. Bowie, A.I.A. in 1993 that show the general location of the building, the plans of the seventh and eighth floors, and details of mouldings used in the building, are on file at the offices of the Maryland Historical Trust.

8. Significance

Survey No. B-4496

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1932 **Builder/Architect** Pike & Cook / Taylor & Fisher, Wm. F. Stone

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G NONE

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

Significance Summary

The U.S. Appraisers' Stores building is the most recent in a series of federal buildings constructed adjacent to the original port of Baltimore for the purpose of monitoring, inspecting, and appraising imported merchandise. From its early days as a major national port of entry, Baltimore has maintained facilities just north of the piers in the area near the corner of Lombard & Gay Streets. Originally, Godefroy & Latrobe's Merchants' Exchange building of 1816 was situated on the northwest corner of the intersection.¹ Then, with the rapid increase in the need for large amounts of storage and appraisal space, the Millsian United States Public Store House No. 1 was constructed on the southeast corner of that intersection. In 1903, in response to the need to modernize and expand the federal presence in the city's mercantile zone, the original Merchants' Exchange was razed and replaced with the U.S. Customs House, designed in the Beaux Arts style by architects Hornblower & Marshall.² Finally, during the 1920s, when the volume of imported goods to be inspected and appraised in the U.S. Public Store House No. 1 building exceeded that building's capacity, public outcry over the delays and political pressure led to its demolition in 1933 and replacement with the present U.S. Appraisers' Stores building.³

The design of the U.S. Appraisers' Stores building has several interesting and, in some cases, unique

¹ After the office of Appraiser was created by the U.S. Congress in 1818, those duties were carried out in the Merchants' Exchange building.

² The new U.S. Customs House was constructed in response to various federal needs for updated facilities and increased space; however, at the time, the needs of the Appraisers' office were still being adequately met by the U.S. Public Store House No. 1, across the street.

³ Photographs of Godefroy & Latrobe's Merchants Exchange building and the U.S. Public Store House No. 1 building may be found in Richard H. Howland and Eleanor Patterson Spencer's *The Architecture of Baltimore, A Pictorial History*; see pages 68-69 and 119-120.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. B-4496

See Continuation Sheet 9.1

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 0.39 acreQuadrangle name Baltimore EastQuadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

Note: See Continuation Sheet 10.1
for latitude & longitude coordinatesA

1	8	5	5	7	4	3	9	8	8	9	9	0	7	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification The site is 100' in the north-south direction and 170' in the east-west direction. It is bounded by city sidewalks on the west, north, and east sides, and a public right-of-way currently occupied by a paved parking lot on the south side.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundariesstate N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title John R. Bowie, A.I.A., Consulting Historical Architectorganization Louis Berger & Associates, Inc.date April 1, 1993street & number 100 Halsted Streettelephone (201) 678-1960 x603city or town East Orangestate New Jersey 07019

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DHCP/DHCD
100 COMMUNITY PLACE
CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023
514-7600

Maryland Survey No. B-4496
United States Appraisers' Stores
Baltimore City, Maryland

Continuation Sheet 7.1

Alley (or Warehouse Alley) right-of-way and the lot immediately to the south. The Inner Harbor Center building and adjacent parking garage are on the opposite side of South Gay Street from the U.S. Appraisers' Stores building. The U.S. Customs House is opposite, on the northwest corner of South Gay and East Lombard Streets. Directly north of the site beyond East Lombard Street is the Holocaust Memorial. Several recently-constructed buildings for Baltimore City Community College are to the northeast of the site. The Baltimore World Trade Center Building and the National Aquarium, both positioned on the waterfront of the Inner Harbor, are located to the southwest and south of the site, respectively.

The U.S. Appraisers' Stores building is designed in a decidedly restrained Art Deco style; it was constructed in 1933 and is reminiscent of Taylor & Fisher's Baltimore Trust Company building (now the Maryland National Bank building) at 10 Light Street. The brick facades are raised up on a two story granite base; they are generally flat and punctuated by recessed double-hung windows and spandrel panels. Visual termination at the eighth floor is achieved with a wide granite string course at sill level with round heads on the tops of the windows. In all four corners, the mass of the eighth floor was set back to provide a sense of relief to the facade and also to add a dramatic focus to the sculpted stone eagles, perched in the corners. At the top of the building, the penthouse mass, which contains much of the building's mechanical components, is set back from the plane of the facades; the penthouse contains a hipped, Ludowici black Spanish tile roof.

The main pedestrian entrance to the building, in the center of the South Gay Street elevation, consists of a series of square pilasters of the Corinthian order that support an applied cornice containing the name of the building on the frieze. The main door is framed with a polished black granite surround, articulated with polished aluminum bosses and capped with a polished aluminum eagle. The main entrance for freight and goods makes up the entire east side of the first floor of the building. It consists of four 25 foot deep, raised loading bays with overhead doors that provide access to large staging areas in front of the two freight elevators, which are positioned near the center of the building. Initially, the large staging areas were open, but they are currently partitioned into offices.

The Public Lobby space on the west side of the first floor connects the main doors (which open onto South Gay Street) with the two passenger elevators. This Lobby space is finished with a cream-colored marble floor, brown-colored marble walls with fluted shallow pilasters, black-marble base (which becomes a wainscot where the floor level drops at the steps in front of the doors) and plaster ceilings. The loading and staging spaces, which occupy most of the remainder of the first floor, originally contained concrete floors, plaster walls and no finished ceilings; however, since they have

Continuation Sheet 7.2

been partitioned, they now contain tile floors and dropped acoustical tile ceilings.²

The second through sixth floors are all laid out to match each other; each contains 17,000 gross square feet of space; however, when hallways, stairways, elevators, walls, columns, rest rooms, and miscellaneous service spaces are subtracted out, they each contain roughly 11,800 net square feet of useable space. The western side of each floor, along the South Gay Street elevation and in the area of the passenger elevators, contains hallways and offices. The lobbies at the passenger elevators contain terrazzo floors with contrasting colored terrazzo borders, marble wainscots, plaster walls and ceilings. The hallways all have similar terrazzo floors with contrasting colored terrazzo borders, marble bases, plaster walls and ceilings; doorways into individual offices have wide mouldings and transoms. The individual offices have tile floors, plaster walls and ceilings, and wood baseboards, chair rails, and picture moulds. On the second through sixth floors, the entire eastern two-thirds of each floor originally contained storage/inspection space accessed either from the adjacent hallways, or else direct through the freight elevators. These spaces originally contained tile floors, plaster walls and ceilings, and no decoration; however, like the first floor, they have been partitioned and now contain carpeted or tile floors, drywall partitions, and dropped acoustical tile ceilings. Doors are modern transomless hollow metal units with wood leaves and light fixtures are modern lay-in fluorescent units.³

Description of the Seventh and Eighth Floors

The western parts of the seventh and eighth floors, along the South Gay Street side and around the passenger elevators, are similar in layout and detail to floors two through six. The elevator lobbies and hallways have the same configuration and finish, and the mouldings on the doors match the mouldings on the other floors. The offices on the eighth floor are similar in layout and finish to the offices on floors two through six; however, on the seventh floor, the rooms on the western side are laid out as laboratories - room configurations are similar to the other floors, but the tile floors contain black stone⁴ bases, and there are no chair rails or picture mouldings on the plaster walls.

² Documents on file with the General Services Administration in Philadelphia do not indicate when the first floor was partitioned into offices; however, it is reasonable to speculate that the changes were made shortly after the Office of the Appraiser was eliminated by the U.S. Customs Service in 1965.

³ It is reasonable to assume that these changes were made at the same time as the changes on the first floor; however, no documentation has yet been found at the General Services Administration in Philadelphia.

⁴ The black stone is rather soft and resembles soap stone, not marble or granite; however, there is no documentation to confirm it.

Continuation Sheet 7.3

The eastern two-thirds of the seventh and eighth floors are generally laid out with laboratories instead of the storage spaces found on the other floors. Laboratory spaces contain the tile floors and black stone base found in the other parts of the seventh floor; likewise, they lack the wood base mouldings, chair rails, and picture mouldings. Walls and ceilings are plaster.

Initially, the seventh floor contained three types of functions: a courtroom and associated support spaces (on the north side of the building), several offices (on the south side of the building), and laboratory and testing spaces (on the west and east side of the building).⁵ The courtroom facilities consisted of the courtroom itself, the judge's chamber and toilet, a clerk's office, and two attorneys' offices in the northeast corner of the building. Additionally, a third attorney's office was initially located to the rear of the courtroom. The south side of the building initially contained offices for the Chief Chemist, plus a library, and a "General Office," which may have been used by the Department Head. Laboratories occupied the remaining spaces on the seventh floor; on the south and east sides, they consisted of a General Analytical Laboratory, a Metal & Ore Laboratory, a Grinding Room, and a Distillation Laboratory. On the west side, they consisted of a Sugar & Molasses Laboratory, a Pump Room, a Conditioning Room,⁶ and a Fibre & Textiles Laboratory.

By 1957, when the seventh floor floors were recovered with new 1/8" thick asphalt tile, little had changed; however, the Metal & Ore Lab (in the southeast corner) had been refitted to become a "Special Lab Group" and the Distillation Lab had been dismantled and refitted to meet the needs of the U.S. Department of Treasury's Alcohol Tax Unit. From the drawings that are on file with the General Services Administration in Philadelphia, little else seems to have taken place on the seventh floor to suggest changes in usage. However, at some point, all of the laboratory equipment was removed, and a dropped acoustical tile ceiling was installed. Minor repartitioning also took place at various dates that are not known, but the walls, base moulds, chair rails (in the office spaces) and picture mouldings (also in the office spaces) were left intact. In 1982, the seventh floor ceased active usage when the Baltimore Regional office of the U.S. Customs Service was closed; since that time, no changes have taken place.

The eighth floor initially was filled with offices and laboratories for the Department of Agriculture's Pure Food & Drug Bureau. The western part, adjacent to the passenger elevator lobby and overlooking South Gay Street, contained the offices, while the remaining two-thirds of the floor

⁵ The names of these rooms may be found on Drawing TFS-CW-480, "Conduit and Wiring, Seventh Floor," by Taylor & Fisher, and William F. Stone, Jr., July 12, 1932.

⁶ It is not known what functions took place in a Conditioning Room.

Continuation Sheet 7.4

contained laboratories.⁷ The Chief's office was located on the south side, in the southwest corner, adjacent to the balcony. Adjacent to his office was the Assistant Chief's office, on the west side, in the southwest corner. The Main Office occupied the rest of the western part of the floor. In the northwest corner were the offices for the Chief Inspector and the Inspectors. All of these spaces had tile floors, wood base boards, plaster walls and ceilings, and wood chair rails and picture mouldings on the walls. Elsewhere on the eastern part of the building were three Food Laboratories and three Drug Laboratories, as well as a library, several microscope rooms, and a special laboratory for the Chief Chemist. Like the laboratories on the seventh floor, these spaces had tile floors, black stone bases, plaster walls and ceilings, and no other ornament. The balconies in each of the four corners of the building were designed to be accessed through French doors from the adjacent offices.

By 1957, when the eighth floor floors were recovered with new 1/8" thick asphalt tile, no change in usage was reported. From the drawings that are on file with the General Services Administration in Philadelphia, little else seems to have taken place on the eighth floor to suggest change in usage. At some point, the laboratory equipment was removed and lightweight partitions and carpeting were installed. Some rooms received dropped acoustical tile ceilings, but most were left intact. At present, three of the four balconies remain accessible; however, the balcony in the northeast corner has been altered with the addition of a concrete block room. The French doors to that balcony have been replaced with a modern door and opening. It is not known when the Pure Food & Drug Bureau left the eighth floor, but the spaces ceased usage altogether in 1982 along with the seventh floor.

Description of the Seventh Floor Courtroom

The seventh floor courtroom is one of the most interesting architectural spaces in the building. From the time of its construction, it served as a setting for those cases where disputes between a government appraiser's value of an item and the shipper's (or owner's) appraisal of that item were resolved.

Architecturally, the courtroom is finished in a restrained manner similar to the exterior of the building, with Art Deco embellishments added throughout. The plaster cornice contains a series of wide, thin steps which accentuate the relative lowness of the ceiling and horizontality of the space. The wainscot is a raised paneled, stained and shellacked red birch, which provides a sense of legal formality without the imposing architectural regimentation of a typical courtroom. The base moulds and chair rails are integrated into the design of the wainscot, so that their architectural appearance is uniform and deliberate. The two sets of double doors were originally stained red and shellacked

⁷ The original names to the rooms can be found on the Drawing TFS-CW-481, "Conduit and Wiring, Eighth Floor," by Taylor & Fisher, and William F. Stone, Jr., July 12, 1932.

Continuation Sheet 7.5

in a manner similar to the wainscot; however, they have had numerous subsequent coats of stain applied over the years, which has caused the finish to darken considerably. The doors are clad with imitation leather to give a sense of federal formality and also to absorb sound; they each contain octagonal windows. The two sets of door openings contain panelled jambs and heads; they also contain pairs of pocket doors on the interior sides of the jambs. These panelled pocket doors are finished in a manner similar to the wainscot and contain the original brass pull hardware and locksets. The judge's bench is mahogany, finished with red stain and shellac. It is articulated with three shallow flat panels and a fluted wood cornice.

Originally, the courtroom contained a mahogany, movable witness stand, finished in a manner similar to the judge's bench; however, it was removed prior to this documentation. The courtroom also originally contained a concavely configured bronze railing that projected into the public seating area and separated them from the participants in the case.⁸ However, that too has been removed and only the patches in the floor (where the posts were anchored) remain. All original lighting in the courtroom has also been removed; when the present dropped acoustic tile ceiling was recently added, new modular fluorescent fixtures were installed.

Functionally, the courtroom is served by several support spaces, located on the east side, behind the judge's bench. These spaces include a judge's dressing and toilet room, and a clerk's office/library, which was later converted to a general office. In the northeast corner, two offices for the attorneys were initially constructed; the partition separating them was later removed and the spaces made into one large room. The courtroom itself contains a raised bench for the judge, a movable witness box (which had been removed by the time of this documentation), and a railing separating the participants in the case from the interested public (which had also been removed by the time of this documentation).⁹ The courtroom is accessed from the hallway by two pairs of double doors; the judge's chamber is also accessed from the hallway by a single door.

⁸ See Clio Group, Inc. and Thomas & Newswanger, Architects, *United States Appraisers' Stores, Baltimore, Maryland, Historic Structures Report*, dated October 7, 1987, on file at the General Services Administration in Philadelphia, page 39.

⁹ The Clio Group's *HSR* (page 39) discusses the "courtroom railing ... between the public seating and the bench;" however, no record can be found to describe the configuration or types of public seats used in the courtroom.

Continuation Sheet 8.1

attributes. Specifically, the structural system (and hence the general massing) for the building was developed before the architectural design was even commissioned. This unique, and somewhat reversed design solution suggests that the Treasury Department was interested in promoting engineer Walter H. Wheeler's fireproof, yet easy-to-fabricate structural support system of reinforced concrete flat plates and steel-encased concrete columns onto the building as the principal form generator.⁴ In essence, this established the basic column grid, the placement of the vertical circulation and support services in the core, and the floor-to-floor heights. It then became the primary challenge of Taylor & Fisher, in association with William F. Stone, the building's architects, to provide a physical sense of overall massing and articulation, consistent with Art Deco design standards and set within the parameters of Wheeler's structural system.

The choice of the Art Deco style by the architects is also a logical and important consideration in the overall architectural development of this "federal" corner. The Merchants' Exchange building was designed in the nationally symbolic, Jeffersonian style of Neoclassicism, as a metaphorical revolt against English styles, practices, and tastes embodied in the Georgian and Federal styles. The Millsian U.S. Public Store House No. 1 building further promoted the federal presence through the use of a more refined, and proportionately delicate Neoclassical building. When the U.S. Customs House was constructed to replace the Merchants' Exchange, the choice of the Beaux Arts was logical and reasonable, since it symbolized the federal government through its use of spatial and facade organization, logic, balance, and hierarchy. These three precedents provided a basis for the Art Deco in the 1932 design of the U.S. Appraisers' Stores building; by that time, the Great Depression had gripped the nation and it was incumbent on the federal government and its architects to provide designs that gave the impression of solidity and steadfastness in times of economic turmoil, while at the same time not appearing unnecessarily opulent or excessive. The architectural design of the U.S. Appraisers' Stores building communicates these concepts in its use of restrained Art Deco features and simple, but long-lasting (and fireproof) materials. Correspondingly, the use of the eagles along the cornice line of the eighth floor and above the main door provides personalized and recognizable metaphors to the public of the role of the federal government as a bellwether of security for national interests during the Depression.

The architectural design of the seventh floor courtroom is entirely consistent with the general design practices represented on the exterior of the building and in the other public spaces throughout. The architects were restrained in their approach to the general configuration of the space and the use

⁴ The Clio Group's *HSR* (pages 18 and 30) indicates that Wheeler had patented this "Smooth Ceiling" structural system and that, as a consultant to the federal government during the 1930s and 40s, he employed it on many buildings. Aside from its fireproof qualities, it was also quick to install, which enabled a typical construction schedule to be dramatically compressed. At the U.S. Appraisers' Stores, all eight floor slabs were poured in less than two weeks - a remarkable achievement by any measure.

Continuation Sheet 8.2

of details and materials. Relatively inexpensive, native woods were used in simple, paneled wainscots and mouldings. Excessive or exuberant cornices were eschewed and instead, carefully proportioned, shallow plaster cornice mouldings were used. The restraint in these elements was important, in part because of the desire to communicate fiscal sobriety to the public, but also because this was a courtroom that required a certain amount of formality, but not to the same degree as was found in federal courthouses.

Historic Context

The location around the U.S. Appraisers' Stores building has historically been devoted to mercantile and port-related activities. Early in the city's history, the first city wharf was constructed in and along the harbor at Pratt Street, just south of Lombard Street. In 1816, architects Maximilien Godefroy and Benjamin Henry Latrobe designed an impressive, domed, Merchants' Exchange building on the northwest corner of Gay and Lombard Streets. This Neoclassical landmark also housed Baltimore's city hall, the Bank of the United States, and the United States Customs House throughout the 19th century. However, within two decades, the importation demands caused by the newly-constructed Baltimore & Ohio Railroad and the expanding port necessitated the erection of a separate building capable of housing the Appraisers' functions.⁵ In 1839, the United States Public

⁵ The role of "Appraiser" has had an interesting development in the history of American Customs practice. Initially, from the time of the founding of the Customs Office in 1789, Appraisers worked together with Collectors in examining all goods brought into the country, appraising their worth, assigning the appropriate duties on those goods, and then collecting said duties. By the 1850s, however, concern over lax collection policies caused the Secretary of the Treasury to create the position of "General Appraiser," whose responsibilities included the surveillance of all Customs operations, in addition to the appraisal and assessment of duties. Eight regions were established, including:

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 1st | Maine, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts |
| 2nd | Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New York |
| 3rd | New Jersey, Pennsylvania (except Presque Isle) and Delaware |
| 4th | Maryland, District of Columbia, and Virginia |
| 5th | North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida (on the Atlantic) |
| 6th | Florida (on the Gulf of Mexico), Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas |
| 7th | The Northern Frontier |
| 8th | California and Oregon |

General Appraisers in each of these regions were instrumental in developing uniform standards of appraisal for imported goods; in addition, they also helped maintain a systematic level of collection of duties and revenues at the various ports of entry. See U.S. Customs Service, *A History of Enforcement in the U.S. Customs Service 1789-1875*, pages 43-47.

Maryland Survey No. B-4496
United States Appraisers' Stores
Baltimore City, Maryland

Continuation Sheet 8.3

Store House No. 1 building was constructed on the opposite corner from the Merchants' Exchange Building at Gay and Lombard. The architect of this four story, brick vaulted building is not known, but the design shows the strong Neoclassical influence of Robert Mills, as well as Godefroy and Latrobe.⁶

Early in the 20th century, the character of the area around "Exchange Place," as it was termed, began to change. In 1903, Godefroy & Latrobe's Merchants' Exchange building was demolished and subsequently replaced with a new, larger and more modern United States Customs House, designed in the Beaux Arts style by architects Hornblower & Marshall. In February 1904, a great fire swept through downtown Baltimore, destroying many buildings; however, the U.S. Public Store House No. 1 building was unaffected, due largely to its fireproof, noncombustible construction. However, by 1907, the U.S. Customs House building was completed.

For the next twenty years, the U.S. Public Store House No. 1 continued to be used by appraisers who were becoming more overburdened by the increasing volume of goods being imported through the Port of Baltimore. During the 1920s, local businessmen and Maryland elected officials organized various campaigns to pressure the federal government to construct a new, more modern facility.⁷ A 1931 newspaper account described the situation:

...the structure has been in constant use, having seen the shipping of Baltimore grow to the point where its once capacious interior is no longer sufficient to handle the imports of the city. The casual visitor to the warehouse today would have a hard time figuring out just what the building is used for, if it were not for the piles of packing boxes on each floor and for the workmen busily engaged in examining their contents.

The normal number of packages to be handled each year is about 10,000, a capacity which was passed years ago and which has been exceeded each year since then. Although an annex was rented a few years ago, it has not proved capable of handling the overflow of merchandise, and at times the sidewalks of Gay Street have served as a parking space for imports until space has been found to place them in one of the two buildings.⁸

⁶ The footprint of the U.S. Public Store House No. 1 building was roughly 100' along South Gay Street and 70' along East Lombard Street.

⁷ See "New Appraisers' Stores Aids Port," *Baltimore*, December 1934.

⁸ See "Old Warehouse Relic of City's Earlier Days," *Baltimore Sun*, April 2, 1931.

Continuation Sheet 8.4

Finally, the political and local pressure forced the Treasury Department to begin considering the replacement of the U.S. Public Store House No. 1 building with a newer, larger facility. In August 1931, officials from the Treasury Department retained Walter H. Wheeler, a Minneapolis engineer who held a patent on early flat plate reinforced concrete framing systems. Wheeler designed the framing systems for an eight story building, with accommodation for an additional four floors in the future. Then, three months later, in November 1931, the Baltimore architectural firm of Taylor & Fisher, in association with architect William F. Stone, was retained to incorporate Wheeler's calculations and sketches into the design for the new U.S. Appraisers' Stores. The Appraisers' functions were moved to temporary quarters in the M.W.S. Realty Building (the McCauley Building), at the northeast corner of Lombard and Commerce Streets, in November 1932;⁹ demolition of the original building began in June 1933 and on April 16, 1935, the new building was dedicated and opened.¹⁰

News accounts heralded the completed building with lavish praise. A *Baltimore Sun* article from December 13, 1934 boasted that

On all eight floors of the building, there is a total of ninety-six electric clocks, nine on each floor. Besides being well furnished with clocks, the building contains more than 1,100 overhead lights, each of which is now equipped with a 300 watt bulb. The equipment of the building is of the very latest type, including automatic pumps for keeping the cellar, which is below water level, dry, automatic doors large enough to admit freight cars, two huge elevators capable of lifting five tons each, and special shower baths in each laboratory to be used if a chemist sets fire to his clothes.¹¹

Initially, the building housed the Appraisers' Stores, except for the fifth floor, which was set up for the Treasury Department's Alcohol Tax Unit (which had previously been housed at Fort McHenry) and the eighth floor, which was set up for the Department of Agriculture's Pure Food and Drug Bureau (which had previously leased private space). Laboratories were constructed for each of these tenants.

⁹ See "Appraiser's Stores," in *Power Pictorial*, May 1933.

¹⁰ See "Wreckers at Work on City Landmark," *Baltimore Sun*, April 13, 1933, and "Appraisers Stores Building Dedicated," *Baltimore*, May 1935.

¹¹ See "Clocks Average Two to Worker," *Baltimore Sun*, December 13, 1934. Interestingly, the article describes the doors being large enough to admit freight cars; however, they have always been used by trucks. There are no railroad tracks along the east side of the building. Also, considering the quantity of clocks originally installed in the building, none are known to have survived in place.

Maryland Survey No. B-4496
United States Appraisers' Stores
Baltimore City, Maryland

Continuation Sheet 8.5

In 1938, a proposal to add the three floors to the new U.S. Appraisers' Stores building was considered; however, the proposal was postponed the following year and in 1940, it was tabled permanently.¹² In December 1941, shortly after America entered World War II, the offices of the Captain of the Port (of Baltimore) and the United States Naval Intelligence were relocated into the third floor of the U.S. Appraisers' Stores building from the U.S. Customs House, which by then was terribly overcrowded. Little is recorded of any changes to the building during the next twenty-five years, except for the installation of new tile floors throughout the building in 1957, the installation of air conditioning in 1958, the modernization of the rest rooms in 1960, repairs to the roof in 1960, improvements to the lighting system in 1961, and occasional movement of partitions or localized alteration of finishes.¹³

In 1965, the position of Appraiser was eliminated from the Customs Department, and the containerization of cargo enabled inspections to take place onboard ships and in container storage yards instead of in the U.S. Appraisers' Stores building. This reduced the staff required to maintain the building and hence enabled the appraisers' functions to be relocated to the U.S. Customs House across the street. In autumn 1982, the Baltimore regional office of the U.S. Customs Service was consolidated with the Boston regional office by the Reagan administration as a cost-cutting move. On September 30, 1982, the regional office was officially closed and early in 1983, the Baltimore district offices were relocated to the U.S. Customs House, and the U.S. Appraisers' Stores building was vacant.¹⁴

Currently, the building is utilized by such federal tenants as the Veterans Administration, the U.S. Immigration Service, and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, & Firearms, and the Internal Revenue Service.

¹² See "Appraisers' Stores Plan Outlined to Committee," *Baltimore Sun*, May 31, 1938, and "Federal Building to be Enlarged," *Baltimore Sun*, July 2, 1938. The articles indicate that the reason for adding the 43,000 square foot, three story addition, would be to move various federal offices into the addition, thus saving significant rental costs. There is no mention that the added space would be used by the Appraisers; considering that two entire floors of the new eight story building were being used by other federal agencies, it is reasonable to conclude that the needs of the Appraisers' office were adequately met with the space they were given.

¹³ See Clio Group's *HSR*, pages 22-23.

¹⁴ See "GSA Seeks Tenants for Vacant Building," *Baltimore News American*, January 19, 1983.

Maryland Survey No. B-4496
United States Appraisers' Stores
Baltimore City, Maryland

Continuation Sheet 9.1

Major Bibliographic References

Clio Group, Inc. and Thomas & Newswanger, Architects, *United States Appraisers' Stores, Baltimore, Maryland, Historic Structures Report*, dated October 8, 1987, on file at the General Services Administration in Philadelphia.

Dorsey, John and James D. Dilts, *A Guide to Baltimore Architecture*, (Tidewater Publishers: Centreville, Maryland, 1981).

Drawings, on file with the General Services Administration - Region 3, Public Building Service, in Philadelphia:

"Plans and Details (Seventh Floor)," by General Services Administration, Contract DOB-03078, April 10, 1973

Drawing 27-117, "Replacing Linoleum with Asphalt Tile," by General Services Administration, November 5, 1957

TFS-CW-480, "Conduit and Wiring, Seventh Floor," by Taylor & Fisher, William F. Stone, Jr., July 12, 1932

TFS-CW-481, "Conduit and Wiring, Eighth Floor," by Taylor & Fisher, William F. Stone, Jr., July 12, 1932

Historic American Buildings Survey, *United States Appraisers Stores*, HABS No. MD-3, copies of the historical monograph may be found in the Vertical File in the Maryland Department of the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore. **IMPORTANT NOTE:** this HABS project is of the original building that was demolished in 1933; it is not of the current U.S. Appraisers' Stores Building.

Howland, Richard H. and Eleanor Patterson Spencer, *The Architecture of Baltimore, A Pictorial History*, (The Johns Hopkins Press: Baltimore, Maryland, 1953).

Newspaper and Journal articles (all may be found in the Vertical File in the Maryland Department of the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore):

"GSA Seeks Tenants for Vacant Building," *Baltimore News American*, January 19, 1983

"2 Federal Units Getting New Quarters," *Baltimore Sun*, December 11, 1941

"Agency Postpones Building Addition," *Baltimore Sun*, August 27, 1939

Maryland Survey No. B-4496
United States Appraisers' Stores
Baltimore City, Maryland

Continuation Sheet 9.2

"Federal Building to be Enlarged," *Baltimore Sun*, July 2, 1938

"Appraisers' Stores Plan Outlined to Committee," *Baltimore Sun*, May 31, 1938

"Appraisers Stores Building Dedicated," *Baltimore*, May 1935

"An Impressive Dedication," *Baltimore News Post*, April 16, 1935

"New Appraisers' Stores Aids Port," *Baltimore*, December 1934

"Clocks Average Two to Worker," *Baltimore Sun*, December 13, 1934

"Moving Stores to Appraisers' New Building," *Baltimore Sun*, December 11, 1934

"Appraiser's Stores," *Power Pictorial*, May 1933

"Wreckers at Work on City Landmark," *Baltimore Sun*, April 13, 1933

"Old Warehouse Relic of City's Earlier Days," *Baltimore Sun*, April 2, 1931

U.S. Customs Service, *A History of Enforcement in the U.S. Customs Service 1789-1875*, (Department of the Treasury, Washington, D.C., 1988)

U.S. General Services Administration, Public Building Service, *Historic Building Preservation Plan, Appraiser's Stores - Baltimore, MD*, dated March 13, 1992, on file at the General Services Administration in Philadelphia.

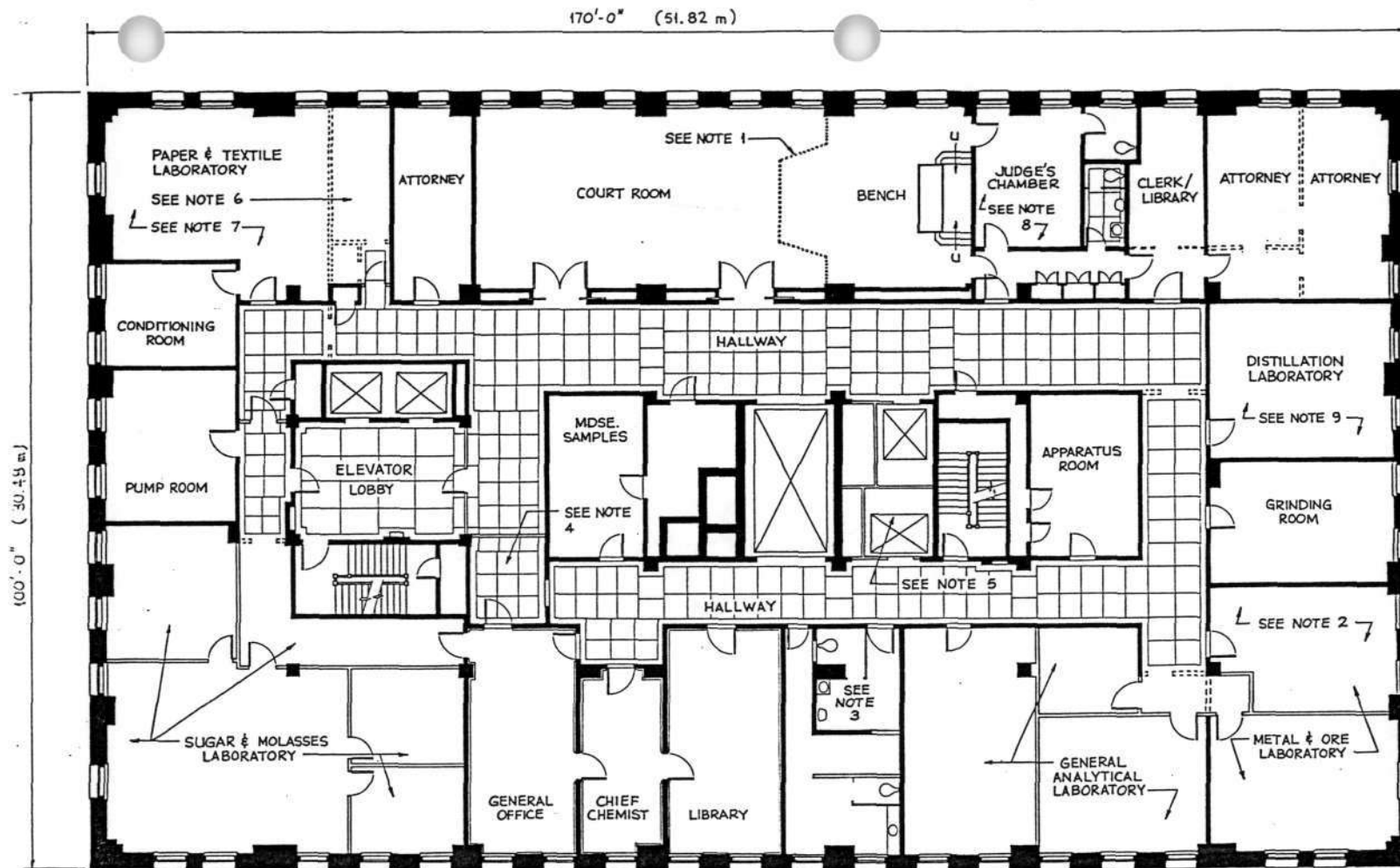
Maryland Survey No. B-4496
United States Appraisers' Stores
Baltimore City, Maryland

Continuation Sheet 10.1

Geographical Data

Latitude: 76 degrees, 36 minutes, 31 seconds, west

Longitude: 39 degrees, 17 minutes, 15 seconds, north



NOTES CONCERNING THE ROOM LAYOUTS:

1. BY 1993, THE ORIGINAL BRONZE COURTROOM RAILING WAS REMOVED; HOWEVER, PATCHES IN THE FLOOR INDICATE ITS ORIGINAL POSITION.
2. AFTER THE METAL & ORE LABORATORY WAS DISMANTLED AND SUBDIVIDED, THIS ROOM WAS CALLED "STOCK ROOM NO 1."
3. THIS ROOM WAS ORIGINALLY A LOCKER ROOM.
4. AFTER THE HALLWAY WAS PARTITIONED-OFF, THIS SPACE BECAME AN ELECTRICAL PANEL ROOM.
5. AFTER THE SECOND LARGE FREIGHT ELEVATOR WAS REMOVED, TWO PASSENGER ELEVATORS WERE INSTALLED.
6. THIS AREA WAS ORIGINALLY A TOILET ROOM.
7. AFTER THE PAPER & TEXTILE LABORATORY WAS DISMANTLED, THIS SPACE WAS CALLED THE "U.S. CUSTOMS CHROMATOGRAPHY LABORATORY."

8. AT UNKNOWN DATE, THE JUDGE'S CHAMBER WAS CONVERTED TO THE DISTILLATION LABORATORY.

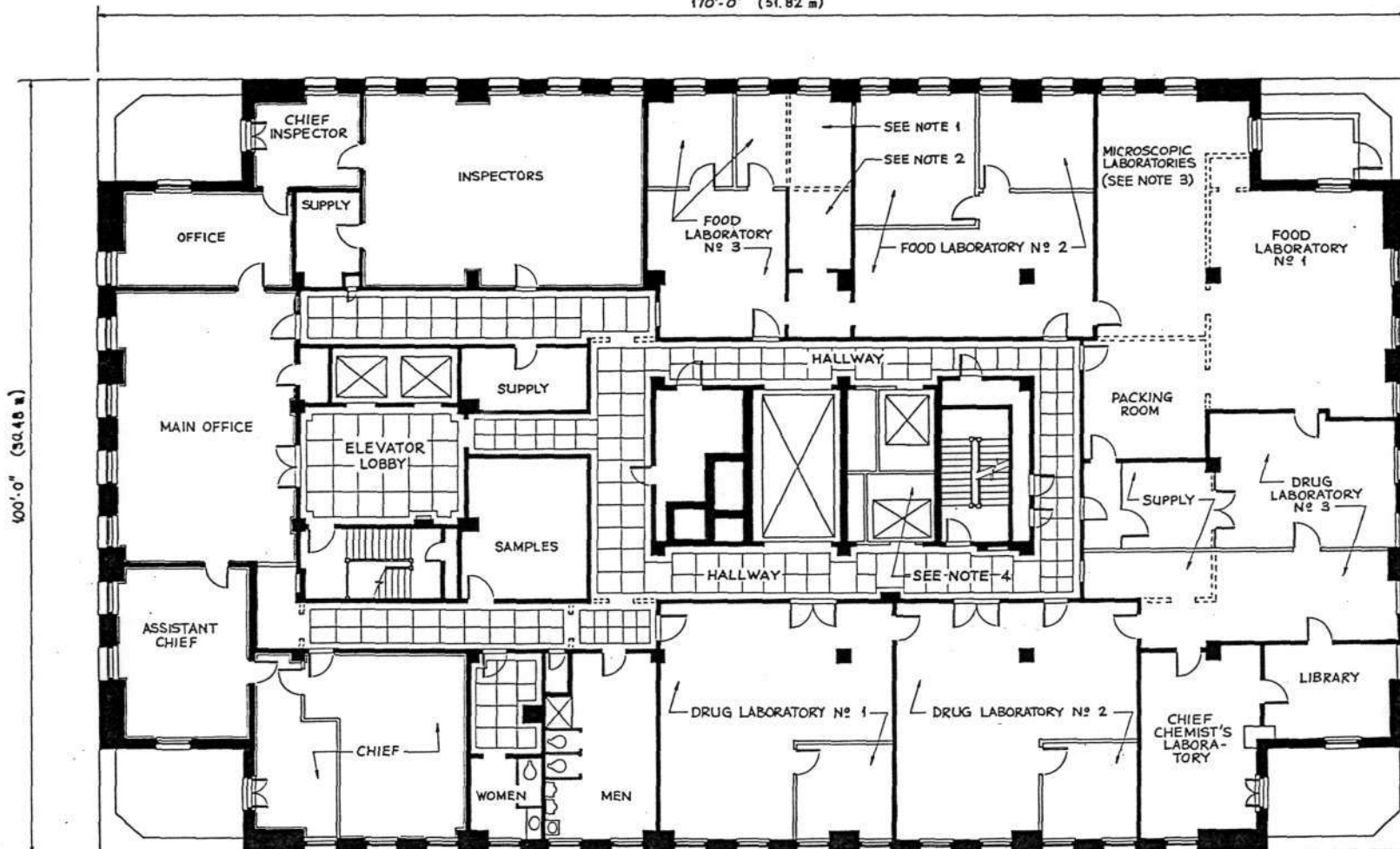
9. AFTER THE DISTILLATION LABORATORY WAS MOVED, THIS SPACE WAS CALLED THE "SPECTROGRAPH ROOM."

SEVENTH FLOOR PLAN



SEVENTH FLOOR PLAN
UNITED STATES
APPRAISERS' STORES
 Baltimore City, Maryland
 Maryland Survey No. B-4496

170'-0" (51.82 m)



NOTES CONCERNING THE ROOM LAYOUTS:

1. THIS AREA WAS ORIGINALLY A TOILET ROOM.
2. THIS AREA WAS ORIGINALLY A STORE ROOM.
3. THE MICROSCOPIC LABORATORIES WERE ORIGINALLY SUBDIVIDED TO CONTAIN A GRINDING ROOM, A POLARISCOPIC ROOM, AND A PUMP ROOM.
4. AFTER THE SECOND LARGE FREIGHT ELEVATOR WAS REMOVED, TWO PASSENGER ELEVATORS WERE INSTALLED.

EIGHTH FLOOR PLAN



EIGHTH FLOOR PLAN
UNITED STATES
APPRAISERS' STORES
Baltimore City, Maryland
Maryland Survey No. B-4496



INDEX TO PHOTOGRAPHS

UNITED STATES APPRAISERS' STORES

103 South Gay Street

Baltimore

(independent city)

Maryland

Photographer: A. Pierce Bounds,
John Bowie Associates

March 1993

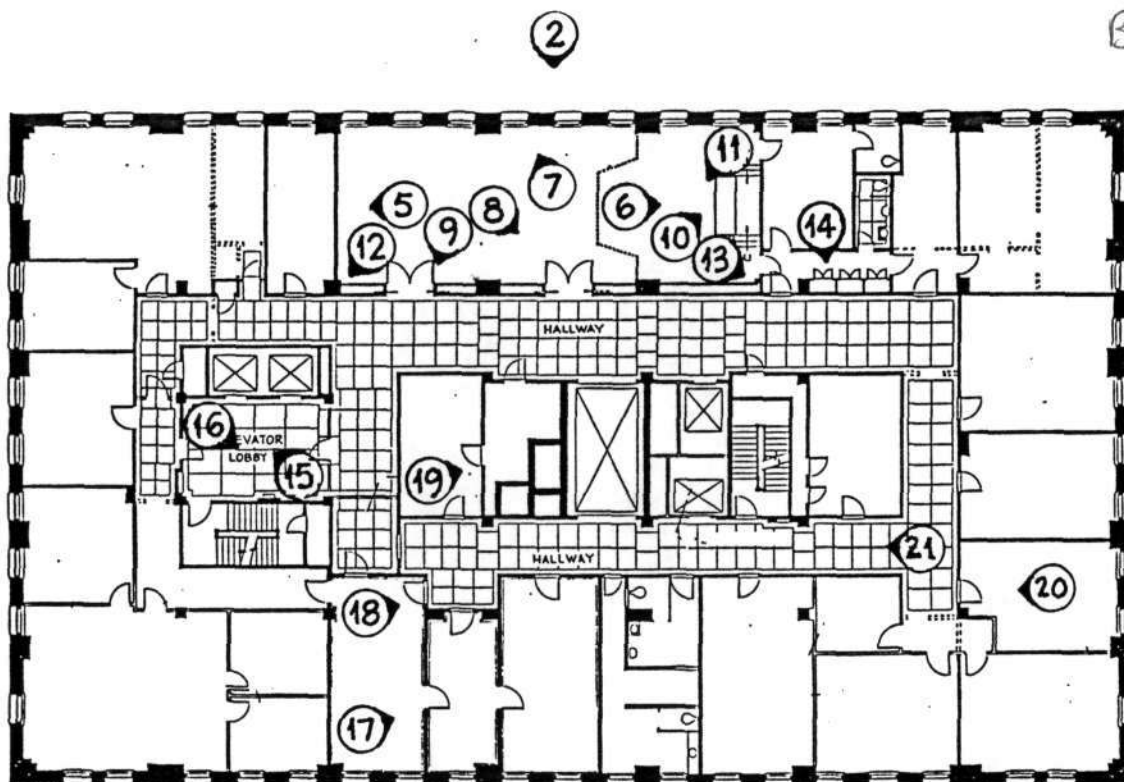
Photo Description

- 1 South elevation, looking north
- 2 North elevation, looking south from parking garage
- 3 West elevation, looking southeast from Lombard Street
- 4 East elevation, looking southeast from pedestrian bridge across Lombard Street
- 5 Seventh floor Courtroom, west interior elevation
- 6 Seventh floor Courtroom, east interior elevation
- 7 Seventh floor Courtroom, north interior elevation, looking northwest
- 8 Seventh floor Courtroom, south interior elevation, looking southeast
- 9 Seventh floor Courtroom, detail of pocket doors and interior doors, west side
- 10 Seventh floor Courtroom, detail of judge's bench, looking northeast
- 11 Seventh floor Courtroom, detail of judge's bench from behind, looking southwest
- 12 Seventh floor Courtroom, detail of wainscot, southwest corner of room
- 13 Seventh floor Courtroom, detail of cornice, southeast corner of room
- 14 Seventh floor Courtroom vicinity, detail of judge's closet
- 15 Seventh floor Elevator Lobby, looking northwest
- 16 Seventh floor Elevator Lobby, looking southeast
- 17 Seventh floor General Office, looking northeast into Chief Chemist's Office and Library
- 18 Seventh floor General Office, detail of doorway, looking east into Hallway

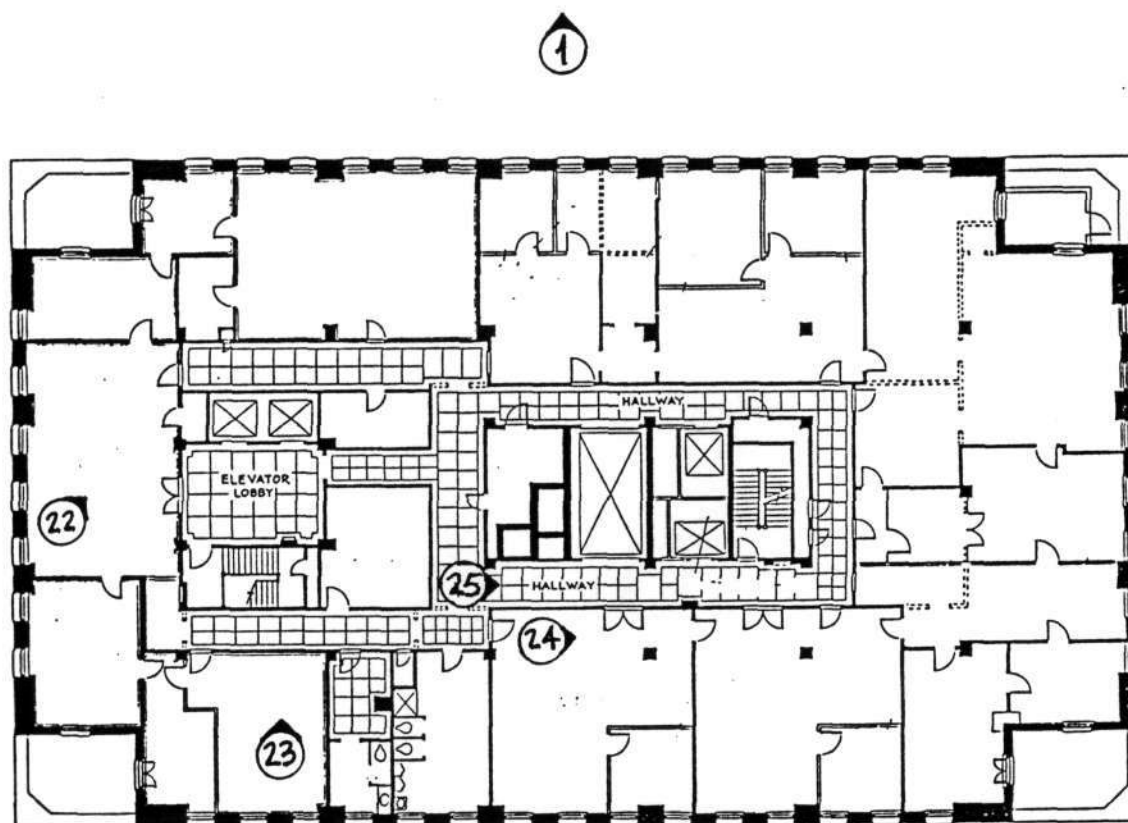
Index to Photographs
United States Appraisers' Stores
(Page 2)

- 19 Seventh floor Merchandise Samples Room, detail of concrete wind bracing (for the building) in the closet
- 20 Seventh floor Metal & Ore Laboratory, later relabelled "Stock Room No. 1" looking west
- 21 Seventh floor Hallway, looking west past the Apparatus Room
- 22 Eighth floor Main Office, looking northeast
- 23 Eighth floor Chief's Office, looking north
- 24 Eighth Floor Drug Laboratories 1 and 2, looking east
- 25 Eighth floor Hallway (south side), looking east

END OF PHOTO CAPTION LIST



SEVENTH FLOOR PLAN



EIGHTH FLOOR PLAN







B-4496



B-4496

